



Oral Communication Skills and EFL Advanced Learners in Beninese Secondary Schools with Reference to ICT

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Abstract: This research work issued from the remark that Beninese EFL learners cannot communicate effectively in real life conditions. Thorough investigations reveal that poor students' listening level, which makes them miss out on oral communication (OC), is the result of the system in which they have been taught. So, this study aims at improving learners' level in oral communication in English by using information and communication technology (ICT) tools. Field work includes questionnaires, classroom observations and interviews. They resulted in the knowledge that if ICT tools are used in EFL classes, learners will perform well. Therefore, teachers, students, parents, authorities and other people intervening in the educational system must accept and favor the integration of the ICTs in EFL teaching and learning in Beninese secondary schools.

Keywords: ICT- EFL- Oral Communication-Advanced Learners- Secondary schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reaction to the traditional approach to teaching and learning has led to the birth of the communicative approach that was introduced in the 1980s. Foreign language education thus shifted its focus toward more authentic and meaningful language use, that is developing students' ability for self-expression and communicating in a socially appropriate manner (e.g., Canal and Swain 1980). Recently, students can access, learn and even compare and contrast enough information on all topics, from the comfort of their home and on their smartphones. English as a foreign language teaching-learning process is no exception to this new way to learn. The 21st century era has revolutionized teaching and learning approaches the world over. With the advent of Information and Communication Technology tools, successful grasp of the most important skill is achievable. Oral communication is so important that the apostle John records in the Bible that at the beginning was the Word.

The focus in language education in the twenty-first century is no longer on grammar, memorization, and learning form rote, but rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to communicate and connect to others around the globe. In order to use a language in its full dimension, an EFL classroom should become a place where, apart from basic language skills, learners develop wide-ranging skills that help them succeed in different spheres of life. We communicate to share our every day's concerns, to raise thoughts, to impress, to give or get information, to raise mood, feelings or emotion, to alert or appease, and so on. Oral communication includes listening skills and speaking skills. Before a message is conveyed, the listener should be able to understand it. For this reason, this study focuses more on techniques and strategies to better the students' listening skills and speaking levels. Even nowadays, most schools still rely on the usage of textbooks due to the curriculum, as well as on traditional teaching methods, where educators teach a topic and students are limited to activities related to it in textbooks. Thus, getting good marks becomes the learners' ultimate goal. In addition, teachers, trained or untrained, are used to teaching English with methods which could not promote the listening and the speaking. Most English teachers dedicate their time to teaching grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing which serve as the basis for evaluation. Solving this problem requires the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to foster the communicative skills in teaching English in Beninese secondary schools.

The aim of this dissertation is to raise awareness of the importance of technology through the apps in educational contexts, to provide several resources which are useful for both teachers and students to develop oral communication in classrooms, and to shed light upon the aspect of inclusion within educational contexts. By means of these resources, educators are going to be able to do engaging activities within formal contexts using authentic materials, and students are going to boost their communicative skills, as well as be encouraged to use the resources outside the educational centers. In other words, this research work focuses on the advantages, the disadvantages and the limitation of ICT in English as a foreign language teaching and learning in Beninese secondary schools.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Language is one the most important parts of any culture. It is the means through which people communicate with one another, build relationships, and create a sense of community. In relationships, people communicate through writing, gestures, mimicry or orally, etc. Of all these forms, oral communication is of a tremendous importance. Indeed, language learning in schools is expected to give a good position to oral communication, which requires efforts from each protagonist: curriculum designers, teachers, and learners. Any English teacher can easily notice that at their fresh entrance in secondary schools, most students show enthusiasm towards the language. They are generally willing to learn the language and even exhibit eagerness towards oral communication. There could be no indication that such learners, a number of years later, would fail in holding conversation in that language. Unfortunately, it is surprising that students complain about their level in English oral communication. They rarely understand oral messages in English. This situation shows a disappointing but predictable trend in the low listening comprehension level of the students which mainly derives from the educational practice generally conducted in Beninese secondary schools. The problem deserves urgent attention from teachers, students, parents, and authorities. The educational system in which students have been taught constitutes a major hindrance to their effectively communicating orally. This research work unveils and insists on a teaching and learning approach through the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This is to improve students' listening comprehension. If a baby is born, the first language learning skill he makes use of to learn his mother tongue is the listening. The baby does not need to learn to read and to write before he starts communicating orally. It is worth stating that there is no communication without a fair listening ability as well as a cognitive capacity to absorb the content of the message conveyed. People ought to listen and successfully understand messages before reacting adequately and therefore participating in real communication. Listening is, indeed, a prior step in oral communication. ICTs provide interaction between teachers and learners, provide comprehensible input and output, help learners to develop critical thinking skills, make learning and teaching become more students-centered, promote learners' autonomy and help them feel more confident, and increase learners' motivation. Therefore, it can be said that the present research seeks to find a solution to students' communicative problem.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Language is a vital tool for communication. It is not only a means by which people can communicate thoughts and ideas. But it helps them build friendships, economic relationships, political power and cultural ties. Erlanga (2020) affirms in that vein that a language is a tool used to communicate with each other, so there is an understanding between the parties involved. The purpose of this research is to work out ways and means likely to help upgrade an effective and efficient teaching and learning approach of oral communication by using the information and communication technology (ICT) in advanced learners' classes in Beninese secondary schools. Such a goal is reachable if deep reflection and thorough mapping have not been made to explore the probable causes behind the flaw in effective understanding oral message in English in secondary schools. Indeed, this work aims at finding out that the school system (curriculum), the administrative policy, and so on, have something to do with the incapacity of the learners to understand oral messages and to respond adequately. It aims at studying the other factors such as teachers, learners, parents and the prevailing pedagogical environment that intervene in EFL teaching and learning in Beninese secondary schools. It seeks to evaluate how qualified English teachers are at their profession, their social, moral, intellectual and pedagogical values, their working conditions, etc. The work is also directed at considering the learners' background, their learning conditions, their social and psychological status in the learning

environment. The techniques and strategies in use, the choice in teaching materials, the ways they are modelled and handled are some relevant aspects likely to help. It is a fact that no oral communication could take place without a fairly good listening ability. Furthermore, the purpose of this research is to explore how adequately teachers arrange sequences of class so that oral communication, through listening sequences, is dealt with in an integrated way with speaking so as to contribute to the success of communication which is the main goal of learning a language. But the major purpose of this research is to explore school stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions about the use of ICT to foster communicative skills in EFL learning process in advanced learners' classes. It is to probe the extent to which technology could be an adequate strategy for achieving effective and genuine oral communication goals in EFL classes. Last but not least, this research aims at evaluating different research instruments, how teachers select appropriate teaching materials and choose relevant techniques and strategies to guide students to a fair mastering of oral communication in terms of social and cultural considerations, moral and ethical realities. When educated that way, this research will be of a great relevance to the system.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The questions that this research work raises are the following:

- [1] What are the probable causes of the students' failure in OC in English?
- [2] What are the challenges of 21st century when it comes to the Beninese EFL advanced learners' effective oral communication development?
- [3] What is the contribution of teaching and learning OC with ICTs to the development of oral communication in EFL advanced learners?
- [4] How can the use of ICT in OC be successfully implemented in the Beninese context?

As far as research hypotheses are concerned, we have:

- [1] The causes of flaws observed in students' OC are mainly those that are related to the educational system, and related to those who are implicated in teaching and learning EFL in Beninese secondary schools.
- [2] The Beninese EFL advanced learners' effective oral communication should be improved enough to help them meet their needs of the 21st century.
- [3] There are probably incentive values in ICT likely to foster the communicative skills in teaching/learning English OC in Beninese secondary schools.
- [4] The implementation of the use of ICT with strategies in OC can be a successful way in EFL teaching and learning Beninese secondary schools.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of this study seeks to answer the question: what is effective technology integration? Though on the surface this may seem like a simple question, it is actually quite difficult to answer, because any answer will be based upon our beliefs and values, how we view learning, and how we view technology's role in the learning process. To approach this question, I will proceed in this part of the work by revisiting some theories such as: Learning theory, Communicative Language Theory, CBA and how they might influence our perspective of technology's role in learning English as a foreign language. Both behaviorism and cognitivism tended to treat learning the same for all humans, despite their age, culture, or personal experiences. Recognizing that these factors might influence how learning occurs, constructivism arose as a means for understanding how individual and social factors might influence the process of learning for different groups of people and individuals. Constructivism holds that learning is constructed by learners on top of previous experience, attitudes, and beliefs.

Connectivism holds that the process and goals of learning in a highly networked and connected world is different than learning in the predigital world, because learners are now persistently connected to information sources and other resources through their electronic devices, such as smartphones or laptops.

The second theory which has the same objective as this research work is Communicative Language Theory.” This theory of communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence and has therefore much to do with the present topic. The third theory on which this work is based is competency based approach theory (CBA). The term Competency Based Approach (CBA) is an approach that allows any person who is learning in a given domain to advance based on his/her ability to master a skill or a competency at his/her own pace regardless of the environment. It is a method that is tailored to meet different learning abilities and can lead to more efficient of the learner’s outcomes. It can be defined as an approach to teaching and learning more often used in learning concrete skills than abstract learning.

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

6.1. Oral Communication

Oral communication is communicating with spoken words. It is a verbal form of communication where we communicate our thoughts, present ideas and share information. In the field of foreign language acquisition, researchers have found it difficult to reach agreement on a rigorous definition of communication strategies (Bialystok, 1990). OCS are generally defined as strategies used to overcome problems resulting from an inadequate knowledge of the foreign language. For the purpose of this study, the term OCS is defined as devices employed by learners in an interactive situation, to achieve a communicative task.

6.1.1. Why Use Oral Communication Strategies?

The main priority for many people learning a second/foreign language is to communicate effectively in the target language. Communication can be defined as the process by which people negotiate, send and receive messages (Rubin and Thomson, 1994). Learners use OCS for various reasons. The first to use the term OCS for one of the processes affecting Language learning was Selinker (1972 cited in Dörnyei and Scott 1997). OCS were claimed to be essential for the process of learning EFL, but were not discussed in detail. In her report, Savignon (1972) recognized the importance of OCS (she refers to OCS as ‘coping strategies’) as a component of language teaching and training.

6.1.2. Existing Methods of Teaching OC Strategies

Many researchers propose the inclusion of OCS instruction in FL teaching (Alibakhshi 2011). Three types of activities of OCS training are suggested by Færch and Kasper (1986). The first are communication games with visual support which allow full visual contact between the participants and full possibilities for immediate feedback. The second are games with no visual support ‘simulating a telephone conversation’. The third type is a monologue, a ‘two-minute talk with limited immediate feedback’. They recommend employing these activities in a cycle sequence, starting with concrete, physical entities, then abstract notions and finally culture-specific notions.

6.1.3. Listening as a Cornerstone in Oral Communication

Listening here is paying attention to the conversation someone is trying to make with you straightly or through an apparatus or an “organized sound” such as a communication on radio, television or a song, etc. as it is conceived or perceived here, it covers the whole process from the act of paying attention down to that of internalizing the message. We should keep in mind that listening is to be cared for, up-graded, adapted to the adequate material so as to make the learners well prepared for oral communication. Awkward listening could but bring bias in the flow of all communication.

6.1.4. What is ICT?

ICT is a wide concept which includes any communication device, such as radio, Television, cell phones, computer and network hardware, satellite systems, apps.... According to UNESCO (2007). According to oxford, ICT is defined as the study of the use of computers, the internet, video and other technology as a subject at school. It is, according to the dictionary, defined as an umbrella term for all of the various media employed in communicating information.

In language teaching/learning, especially English as a foreign language, oral communication is the best skill which can help both teachers and students to reach their goal. In addition, the Information and Communication Technology is the new solution to foster the OC skills to better learn English

language. John Levis (2011) points out in the same way by saying: “Technology is becoming an increasingly integral part of teaching in general and particularly for teaching language. ”The Information and Communication Technology tools include the following instruments: Phone (Apps), Computer (Internet) and others.

6.2. The 21st Century Challenges in EFL Learning

The 21st challenges in EFL learning are the followings: communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

6.2.1. The Communicative Learning

The communicative language teaching and learning is defined as an approach of teaching or learning a second or a foreign language that focuses on learners’ interaction whether as the means or the ultimate of learning a target language. CLT is a learner-centered approach, in which activities are focused on and driven by students instead of teachers.

6.2.2. Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is a social process whereby students learn through interacting with others. It involves students expressing their thoughts and opinions, solving problems and performing inquiry together, observing how others think and learn, and teaching each other reciprocally.

6.2.3. Creativity in Learning

Creativity is the third main challenge of 21st century. Teachers must also take it into account when teaching EFL to prepare learners to be creative. Important prerequisites for cultivating creativity in school education are the different ways of expression, in combination with the active participation of students in the construction of knowledge (e.g., formulating a problem is a more important process than problem-solving).

6.2.4. Critical Thinking in Learning

The critical thinking is another main approach to develop in EFL classroom to help students react adequately to topics by giving their own analysis. Critical thinking is a higher-order cognitive skill that is indispensable to students, readying them to respond to a variety of complex problems that are sure to arise in their personal and professional lives. The cognitive skills at the foundation of critical thinking are analysis, interpretation, evaluation, explanation, inference and self-regulation. When students think critically, they actively engage in communication, analysis and synthesis.

Critical thinking helps learners improve their decision-making as it lets them make decisions by themselves. It enhances problem-solving ability and problem solving is the key skill required for adapting to changes and facing challenges. Critical thinking refines students’ research skills through observation, analysis, synthesis and experimentation with every aspect in detail for a better result. It polishes learners’ creativity and stimulates their curiosity to help them find the right solution for the problem they are working on.

6.2.5. The Use of ICT in OC to Meet the 21st Century Challenges

This part is concerned with the way the use of information and communicative technologies in fostering oral communication skills can help Beninese EFL advanced learners to meet their needs or the 21st century challenges. In Computer-supported Collaborative Work (CSCW), sometimes known as shared workspace or groupware, students work on a common document mediated by computer or networked computers. Wikis is one such example where group members contribute and edit the same set of online documents using Web browser with simple mark-up language.

6.2.6. Implementing Collaborative Learning with ICT

The use of ICT to support collaborative group learning is yet to be a common phenomenon in today’s classrooms (for example, see Becta, 2007). A teacher needs to build the culture of collaborative learning, both online and offline over a period of time. Building a collaborative classroom culture is an ongoing process, and requires continual effort. Some strategies include: praise a group for their collaborative effort, demonstrate how different ideas can be combined to build a better idea, assess the students based on group effort, and show to students how they have progressed as a group over time.

6.2.7. ICT in Oral Communication for Creativity

Digital information and communications technologies (ICT) can be seen as a set of tools which can be chosen as and when they are appropriate in the creative process. Creativity can be promoted and extended with the use of new technologies where there is understanding of, and opportunities for, the variety of creative processes in which learners can engage.

6.2.8. ICT in Oral Communication for Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an important aspect in learning process. It can lead students to learn deeply to get content mastery. It also can help them to think more about problems in order to find problem solving. Those aspects are important for students in learning process in order to support them to find their own understanding about concepts. This is in line with the basic concept of critical thinking by Elder and Paul (2005) who state that critical thinking can teaches students to think their way to conclusions, defend positions on complex issues, consider a wide variety of viewpoints, analyze concepts, theories, and explanations, clarify issues and conclusions, and solve problems. It can be said that critical thinking help students to think about any concept based on their own understanding.

6.2.9. How to Integrate ICT in the Classroom

There is a common miss conception that the integration of technology in the classroom can be a financial burden, but students do not necessarily need their own device to succeed with technology. The use of technology during whole-class instruction can foster student engagement for auditory and visual learners. Integrating simple technologies Power Points, games, internet homework assignments, or online grading systems can be difference makers in students' growth in the classroom.

7. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This part is concerned with the method and strategy used to collect the data while writing this document

7.1. Research Design

Under the light of all insightful consideration, the present research work is involved in the mixed method design. It views an integration of both data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) for an accurate search in this rather complex topic going as: "using ICT to foster oral communication skills in EFL advanced learners in Beninese secondary schools". The choice of the mixed method design is also justified by types and nature of the research instruments used in the present study.

7.2. Population of Research and Sampling

A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that are the main focus of a scientific query. A research is done for the benefit of the population. In this research, 592 questionnaires have been sent to learners and 577 have been returned back. 110 EFL teachers received questionnaires and all of them returned their questionnaires. 15 advisers and inspectors have been given questionnaires and all have been returned. 51 school authorities, 22 head teachers (HT) called "animateurd' etablissement" (AE), and 15 English speaking club leaders (ESCL) and an experimental group of 36 students have been investigated These populations were chosen from 36 Beninese public and private schools at the rate of two public schools and one private school per department (the list of the schools is in appendices). These schools are chosen from town and village to cover the different categories of teachers and learners in the country.

Table1. Sent and returned questionnaires

Population	Sent questionnaires	Returned questionnaires	Percentage
Students	592	577	97.47%
Teachers	110	110	100%
Advisers&Inspectors	15	15	100%
Validated questionnaires	717	702	97.91%

Table2. *Category and number of people interviewed.*

Interviewees	Number
Members of school administration	51
English headteachers	22
English speaking club leaders	15
Total	88

8. PRESENTATION AND THE ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

In this part of the work, the results are presented and analysed.

8.1. Presentation of the Results

This part deals with the presentation of the results. It is the compilation of the answers from the different respondents. In fact their answers to the different questions put to them can be summarised as follows:

- 60. 13% of students are learning English to have good marks.
- 71% of students have their average in English.
- 94,11% of students do not have the opportunity to practice English out of classroom.
- Parents do not see the importance of learning English.
- 98.79% of students are bad at oral communication.
- 54.76% of students said that French language is dominant in their English classes.
- Only 12.65% of students are interested in oral communication.
- 87.35% of students focus their learning on grammar and reading comprehension.
- Only 9.19% of students said that they have once made use of of ICT in classroom.
- 100% of the students are interested in the use of ICT in learning English.
- Students have very often materials and equipmentproblems in oral communication.
- 59.15% of the consulted teachers are not qualified.
- Teachers teach English for only two hours in ‘serie technique’, three hours in ‘serie D’ and only four hours in ‘serie A’.
- 89.09% of teachers said that students are bad at oral communication because of grammar and reading comprehension focussing in teaching.
- 90% of teachers said that Oral communication is not taken into account in the different tests and exams.

9. DISCUSSION

The English language is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Learning English can be a great experience not only because it is widely spoken around the world, but also because it has many advantages such as international relationships, job opportunities, media entertainment, economic development, etc. But unfortunately, despite the amount of years they have spent in learning this language, students are not able to use the language in oral communication in the different 21st century contexts. This situation made me address questionnaires to students, to teachers, to advisers and inspectors. I also interviewed some members of school administration, some head teachers and some English speaking club leaders. I even observed teachers in classrooms and proceeded to some experimentation. The causes associated with this students' incapacity to perform well in oral communication and the way to come over are summarized in:

- The educational system which is not in favor of English language promotion as it (the system) is responsible for the following hindrances - Teachers are not trained on listening teaching. Most of English teachers are sent to their classrooms after recruitment. - The weekly hourly quota devoted to English learning (from 2 to 4 hours a week) is not sufficient. Here, the

weekly quota varies according the series. In “série A” students have 4 hours a week. In “série D” they have 3 hours a week and in “série technique” they 2 hours a week. - The school tests and the national exams do not include listening. In fact, this language skill is tested at school. Students give therefore no importance to it. - The schools are not provided with adequate listening materials.

- Students are not aware of the advantages of English language and this ignorance leads to the following - running only after marks. In fact, what worries students the most is not understanding oral communication and speaking but getting good marks which allows them to go upper class. - Lack of motivation, fear of making mistakes, shyness, fear of being laugh at, but interested in the use of ICT in listening are almost what characterizes students in Beninese secondary schools.
- Teachers are to some extent responsible to the students’ lower level in listening and speaking as showed by the following remarks on them: - Lack of the motivation. Teachers are not motivated by their employer (the state). Failure in classroom management. During the classroom visits, most of teachers did not well managed their classrooms and had thereby some difficulties to control the classrooms. - Failure in classroom management, difficulties to control classrooms, the bad mastery of the lesson content and no lesson planning lead very often teachers to an anxiety which creates a hostile atmosphere in the classroom. - Generally, teachers do not teach listening and some are unable to manipulate the listening materials.
- Parents see no interest in learning English and give priority to other subjects while providing their children with learning materials.
- For the divisors, inspectors, teachers and others the use of ICT in listening can help students understand oral communication. From these findings, there is a clear assumption from the research participants that the use of ICT to foster OC skills is the best way to learn English as a foreign language in Beninese secondary schools.

10. SUGGESTIONS

This part of the work deals with the role of each person intervening in educational system and in English as a foreign language teaching in particular.

10.1. Suggestions to Teachers

Teachers remain central to the learning process. In fact, the introduction of ICT in education has not changed the teachers’ traditional role of leader in the classroom. A shift in the role of teachers utilizing ICT tools to that of a facilitator does not obviate need for teachers to serve as leaders in the classroom. The old teacher leadership skills as practices are still important (especially those related to lesson planning, preparation and follow –up). Teachers should definitely understand that they are not going to be replaced by ICT.

• Lesson Planning is Crucial When Using ICTs

Teachers’ lesson planning is vital when using ICTs. Where little lesson planning has occurred earlier, research shows that learners’ work is often unfocused and can result in lower attainment. Introducing technology in English learning will not change the teaching and learning process. In fact, the existence of ICTs alone does not transform teachers’ practices. However, it can enable teachers to transform their teaching practices. Their pedagogical practices and reasoning influence their use of ICTs.

• Reinforcing Teachers’ Technical Abilities and Knowledge of ICTs

Teachers should be prepared to benefit from ICT use. This is about more than technical skills. The use of technology in everyday teaching and learning activities to foster the OC skills in English as a foreign language, appears to be more important than specific instruction in computer classes. For a successful ICT integration, one-off training is not sufficient. Teachers require extensive, on-going exposure to ITCs to be able to evaluate and select the most appropriate listening resources. However, the development of appropriate pedagogical practices is more important than technical mastery of

ICTs. Unfortunately, few teachers have broad expertise in using ICTs in their teaching. While the development of technology skills is seen to have a role in the teaching and learning English language process.

- **Lesson Content Mastery in OC Teaching**

Before succeeding in English language teaching, teachers should have mastered the lesson to be taught. No matter how teachers are trained in pedagogical practices, the academic knowledge is very important for a successful teaching. In the same way, the way ICTs are used in lessons is influenced by teachers' mastery of their subjects and the way ICT resources can be utilized and related to them. Lesson content mastery and understanding of students' comprehension make ICT use more effective

- **Teachers Must Change their Attitude**

Frequently, colleagues are heard complaining that learners use their hand held devices in the classroom, which can be distracting and disturbing. This can be a challenge in a technology-rich environment. However, people should also agree that it often happens that learners use an electronic dictionary and voice translator on Smartphone during their English class, or use their mobile device to access online resource related to OC learning material. It should be understood that teachers should be life-long learners, and need to modify their way of teaching to meet the needs of learners who are different from year to year. Given the fact that learners today use many type of ICT in their daily life, it will be beneficial if teachers consider infusing ICT when they design their course.

- **Some Strategies and Techniques for Effective OC Teaching**

There are a number of orthodoxies propagated about the oral communication teaching and the treatment of listening on teacher training courses. These include: - Using plenty of recorded material. - Preparing students for listening by setting the scene, introducing the characters, preteaching vocabulary etc - Before students listen, set a listening which directs them to overall 'gist' understanding of the passage. - Checking the answers to the task, playing the recording again if necessary. - Setting further tasks, which direct students to a more detailed understanding. - Using only the tape script (if there is one) as a last resort. - Making the recording, and the tasks, as 'authentic' as possible. - Devote plenty of time to listening work - Make use of live listening a lot, with natural speed and pronunciation but tailored to the students' interests in terms of content, and graded in terms of linguistic complexity. - Give students practice in using active listeners' signals and being effective conversational participants. - Introduce gradually some recorded material. - Use video where it is necessary and appropriate. - Give students plenty of preparation and support for listening there is a lot to be said for these approaches, and they are certainly very helpful in spreading a concern for supporting the development of students' OC skills, rather than just testing them.

10.2. Suggestions to the Administrators for the Integration of ICT in EFL Learning

In order to integrate ICT in OC teaching to foster the learning of English language in Beninese secondary schools, the administrators have the following fundamental roles to play.

- **Raising Awareness Nowadays**

ICT availability and accessibility are no longer the biggest barriers as how to use ICT for teaching and learning has been attracting more attention among educators and learners. As ICT literacy is becoming increasingly important for educators and students, it is highly necessary for educational administrators and curriculum designers to make effort to raise awareness among teachers of English as a foreign language that ICT can be a useful enhancer for language learning if used properly. Training programmes can be organized to help teachers and learners realize that commonly available ICT can be used for language teaching and learning purposes and teachers should be encouraged to explore innovative ways of utilizing ITC in their teaching practices.

- **Motivating Teachers**

Incentives must be developed to promote effective teacher partition in learning English as foreign language in Beninese secondary schools. In fact, teachers require additional motivation and incentives to participate actively in the process of using ICT in OC activities to foster the learning of English

language. A variety of incentives can be used, including certification, professional advancement, paid time off to participate in using ICT in OC to teach English language sessions, pay increase formal and informal recognition at the school community levels and among peers.

- **Motivating Students**

Workshop that can aim at raising learners' motivation to the importance of exploiting the potential of ICT to English language purposes should be organized. It means that training 188 on the use of ICT applications as well as on the use of ICT tools and resources in the context of English language learning should be given to all students to achieve the desired English language learning outcomes. Teachers' awareness towards the importance of online interaction with their learners should be raised.

- **Reorganizing English Language Teaching**

In order to help teachers to teach and students to learn English language successfully, the teaching of that language in secondary schools must be reorganized. First of all, the way English language is being taught as a subject cannot contribute to its promotion. In fact, English is being taught in secondary school like other subjects apart from French. It is considered as only a subject in which the marks are more important than the speaking. To reach communicative role of English language, it should be taught in the same way French language is being taught. That is to teach it as a subject like mathematics, biology etc... and the language in which other subjects will be taught.

10.3. Suggestions to Parents

The success in students' learning English language will be effective if each of the actors of educational system, including their parents, contribute to that.

Parents should regularly make control to see if their children attend English class. This consists of having the English teacher's contact and even the school authorities' contacts to call them to be informed of their children's behavior, their class attendance, and their marks or of their attitude towards English language. Parents can sometimes pay visit to their children English teacher, to the school authorities for the above information on their children. Unfortunately, what is generally noticed is that parents or most of them do not care for what happens at school, except waiting for the final results of their children.

In addition, parents should provide their children with different documents and tools (ICT tools) which can help them learn effectively English language. In fact, learning in general and leaning English as a foreign language in particular cannot be effective without appropriate documents and tools, including ICTs. Unfortunately, most of parents, as declared by their children, pay less attention to English documents. Some of them do not even buy any document for their children. It is clear that if parents do not provide their children with documents and instruments to be used in learning English language, normally, they should not expect good results from them. Their children will continue with their bad English learning strategies.

The fourth point is concerned with the school fees that parents should pay on time. This point is also important because most of parents do not pay on time the school fees and consequently their children are regularly sent out of classroom. Some of parents do not pay at all the school fees and their children can simply loose a whole academic year. When students are sent out from class because of school fees, they are in great difficulty when they are back. In fact, teachers do not wait for them to continue the lessons and these students who were absent have great difficulty to catch up with their mates. During the classroom observations 191 some students were absent because they were sent out for not having paid the school fees and were unaware of all that had been said during their absence.

The fifth point could be funny, but very important. It concerns the way parents feed their children at home and at school. Some parents do not care about feeding their children. Before learning at home, children should have breakfast lunch or dinner. If they eat and are satisfied, they can be concentrated on learning lessons. At school they should be given pocket money for their breakfast. If they are hungry they could not follow the teacher and understand the lessons. People generally say "a hungry man is an angry man". So, parents are invited to provide their children with food so that they can be concentrated on what teacher is saying in classroom and on learning their lessons at home.

The sixth point is concerned with controlling children at home. At this level, it is important to remind parents that their presence at home is very important in their children learning process. In fact, children cannot go out if their parents were inside. Generally, when children go out (without being advised), it is for things which have nothing to do with their lessons. But when parents are at home, they get afraid and do not go out and can learn their lessons. But unfortunately most parents do not give this chance to their children. Even if they were present or absent, they children can go out and come back when they want. This libertinage does not help children to seriously take their study into account. As a result, English language, which is yet regarded with less importance, is completely neglected.

Another thing parents must do to promote English language is to arouse the desire to listen to English speaking channels at home. By doing so, children will be accustomed to native accent and can improve their listening level. If children's listening level is improved, they can then understand their interlocutors and will be able to communicate with them. Parents can very often buy some audio CD or VCD containing English songs and films or recordings that are at their children levels for them.

The following point that parents should do in order to impact their children English listening and speaking levels is allowing them to be members of English speaking clubs. In fact, the results from English speaking clubs show that they are successful way to improve students' poor communication in English. Parents can then inscribe their children in English speaking clubs and keep an eye on their movements in order to prevent them from turning away from the objective of the clubs.

10.4. Suggestions to Students

The success of English as a foreign language learning in Beninese secondary schools is not only the concern of teachers, parents and educational authorities. Students are one of the main actors who must contribute to the promotion of English language in their country.

Students should be Active Learners if they really want to improve their oral communication skills. For a successful learning of English language, learners must give importance to English language. They should remember that English language, apart from being a subject in which getting good marks is important, is a language which dominates the world and deserves to be learnt in order to break linguistic barriers. English language learners can achieve success by setting their own goal (the communication) and by directing their studies towards their own expectations (Communication). Learners can help themselves achieve the goal by determining their own language needs and by defining why they want to learn English language. Being aware of the importance of English language, students must then be regular in class, be concentrated on lessons being developed by the teacher, and on what his/her mates are saying. Moreover, the success in English language learning being strictly related to the communicative role of the language, learners must turn back to their traditional English language learning strategies, mainly focused on grammar, reading comprehension and writing in which marks are their objective, to give priority to OC which can help them develop their face the challenges of the 21st century. In fact, OC activities are, after what has been said so far, one of the successful ways that can help learners to learn effectively English language and be able to commutate with people in it. They will be more successful in learning the English language if they use ICTs to foster their OC skills. The success in English language learning depends also on some tips that students must respect.

11. CONCLUSION

The Beninese state has been colonized by France and its language (the French language) has then been adopted as the first language used in the country. Indeed, the French language is being used at school and at work place since the colonization. From 20th century to early 21st century, the French language had been the most important one in Beninese citizen's daily transaction because it helped to communicate and could help get jobs. This was successful because it was relevant to the era.

Many scholars through experimentations discovered the important role that oral communication could play in learning a language and they have suggested many activities in that way. In classroom, teachers should devote a considerable part of their teaching time to OC in order to enable their students to communicate in the language once out of situation of classroom. They (the scholars) have demonstrated that OC, especially when taught with technology is one the best ways to learn a foreign

language. OC can be taught with different ways, from the traditional way to the digitalized way. The traditional way makes use of the teacher's voice. It can regularly be used by teachers and students living in poor condition or living in rural area where there is no electricity. Teachers should take care of the way they pronounce words. They should make effort to be close to native speaker. Secondly, teachers can use tape, radio and T.V sets in OC, which requires more economical effort than using teacher's voice. The last part is OC teaching and learning with computer, phone and apps, which are also more expensive than the formers. If teachers take into account all that has been said through this document, English language will be more vivid and the learners will be able to use the language for the 21st challenges.

Teachers should, from now on, plan and teach lessons according to competency based approach. In fact, according to Baskerville (2020) "competency based approach is where a person must demonstrate his /her ability to perform a specific task". This approach will change the teacher centered approach to students centered approach. Teacher will therefore give much time to learners to practice the language instead of spending a great part of the teaching time speaking alone. The Teacher Talking Time (TTT) may be less large than Student Talking Time (STT). By doing this, students will be accustomed to the language and thereby their OC skills will start getting better and better. If they spend more time in practicing the language in classroom, they will surely improve their listening and speaking and will be able to respond to what they listened to when the occasion occurs.

The aim of this study is also to encourage the secondary school English language teachers to use Information and Communication Technology to foster the OC skills in their classrooms. In fact, it is generally thought that the students' speaking level can be improved by focusing the English teaching on oral communication. Many scholars have shown that OC is nowadays one of the best ways to acquire a language, especially English as a foreign language.

The purpose and the importance of teaching and learning English language with these ICT tools is to make lessons interesting, learning easy and enable teachers to easily express concepts. Language learning instruments can significantly increase learners' achievement by supporting learning. Authentic materials for English language classroom are free and very easy to find online. Learners can easily find on net songs, movies clip, online video etc. Each student can find on the net what can attract him. On YouTube students can be provided with any audio or video clips they want. All these are teaching materials which can help them be close with English language that they are learning.

From all that has been said so far, the following major points can be retained: - The recommendation of CBLT (competently-based language teaching) to English language teachers in order to make their students be autonomous. With CBLT students would be participating activity in the target language learning. They will spend more time on work and will be involved in what they do in the classroom. In addition, the OC practices are highly recommended to students in learning a language. In fact, these strategies, compared to the others (waiting, reading), seems to be more useful in teaching and learning English language. It offers many activities which can help students better their OC skills and thereby improve their speaking. Finally, the use of ICT is recommended to foster the OC skills in English language teaching and learning. Actually, many scholars attest that ICT tools, either they are old or new, are very important in language learning. They propose many activities in that way to help teachers better their English language teaching and students to improve their speaking so that they can be able to use English language outside the classroom and in real life context or to meet the challenges of the 21st century rather than leaning it for marks purpose.

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